

DSMC'S ST. LOUIS EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

"Keep the Students Happy, Teach Them a Lot and Keep Them Challenged"

Julius Hein • Patty Predith

Standing in line at the cafeteria in the U.S. Army Aviation and Troop Command, St. Louis, Mo., one might speculate on why so many Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps officers are seen around the Federal Center. The answer is simple—they're students at the DoD Defense Systems Management College (DSMC).

History

The Defense Systems Management College opened its St. Louis campus in January 1985. Shortly thereafter, in May 1985 the College dedicated its new facility at the St. Louis Federal Center. The College's Central Region Director is Julius Hein; the Region's management support assistant is Patty Predith.

The St. Louis campus came into being as a result of the demand for courses and the high TDY costs associated with sending students to the main campus at Fort Belvoir. Since 1976, DSMC has exported its course offerings and signed Memoranda of Agreement with host organizations to support "mini" DSMCs. In addition to the St. Louis Central Region, DSMC currently has three other Regional Centers:

- Western Region: U.S. Air Force Space Division, Los Angeles, California.
- Eastern Region: U.S. Air Force Hanscom Air Force Base, Boston, Mass.
- Southern Region: U.S. Army Missile Command, Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

At the Central Region, we offer 25 to 40 courses per year. The majority are taught by the course director, and supplemented by DSMC faculty members and guest lecturers. All courses are part of the Defense Acquisition University's (DAU) certification program. Generally, all students participating in the certification program at Levels I, II or III belong to one of the professional acquisition career fields. The following "birds eye" view of our activities, learning environment and amenities give you an idea of what to expect when attending one of our courses in St. Louis.

Through-put

We offer courses, seminars and workshops to all four Services, other federal agencies, defense industries, universities and research institutions. Our annual through-put for FY 94 was 1,080 students in courses, and 499 students in seminars and workshops. Our students come from all 50 states and overseas commands. The majority of the students are selected through

DoD photos



the Army Training Requirements and Resources System program — a program currently used by all four Services.

Keeping Our Students Informed

Initially, we send each student a welcome package with directions to our classrooms, parking, dress attire, course overview materials and tourist information about our beautiful city of St. Louis. As another service to our out-of-town students and visiting professors, we suggest billeting arrangements. About 10 to 15 percent of selected students do not show up for the start of the class, and we then must supplement with stu-



dents willing to attend on a "stand-by" basis. Because our Regional offices and classrooms are in close proximity to Scott Air Force Base, Ill., the Defense Logistics Agency, Coast Guard, McDonnell Douglas and other defense industries, "stand-by" students readily fill the gap for those who do not show up at the start of the course. At the start of any given course, we usually have 3 to 5 students lingering outside the classroom on the first day hoping to attend — and interestingly, most do.

Registration

As our students register, soft music resonates throughout the classroom, creating a relaxed, non-threatening first impression of our Region and its

The course materials — writing pad, pencil and welcome folder — are set up at each student's seat. Included in the welcome folder are: the St. Louis Region FY95 schedule, career path chart, miscellaneous command information, command map, auto/airline/taxi phone numbers, various sport schedules, and St. Louis and community recreational pamphlets. We expect students to be prompt — classes start at 0800 sharp. At this time, the Regional Director gives an introduction by welcoming the students to our Region and introducing the assistant, the course directors and any visiting faculty.

Afterwards, our assistant presents various administrative information to the students and faculty regarding parking, badging, materials, lodging, telephone and fax availability. The director proceeds with an overview, and the course is then underway.

Entertainment Committee

During this introductory period, each table "nominates" a spokesperson to serve on the entertainment committee. The process is a controlled, yet free-flowing and unrestrained election. The entertainment committee members meet at noon with the Regional Director and assistant and

select the lunch menu. Food is either catered and eaten in the classroom or purchased and consumed in the main cafeteria. These working lunches give us an excellent opportunity to get to know one another. For now and the future, we unequivocally support the importance of student interaction and networking.

Amenities

Our motto is: *Keep the students happy, teach them a lot, and keep them challenged.* To achieve that end, our Center provides several amenities:

Large classroom to accommodate 40 students • cushioned chairs • large tables • markerboards on all four walls • butcher block easels • faculty table • supply/reference area • message board • overhead and 35mm slide projector with screen • two 35" Mitsubishi suspended color monitors • podium stand • entertainment center with compact disc and cassette tape player • $\frac{3}{4}$ " and $\frac{1}{2}$ " video cassette recorders • adjacent breakout room • individual storage space for course materials and belongings • conference table and cushioned chairs • additional reference material • refreshment, fruit and snack area • commercial and DSN telephone instruments • computer and modem hook-ups • telefax machine services • library check-out services for books and tapes • barber shop • mail service • reproduction capabilities • medical support • consulting services • individual mentoring • university program guidance • industry points of contact • visit to industry.

If it sounds like the DSMC Central Region is a great place to learn, it's because we are. Your continued professional acquisition education is our business — *our only business*. We're here to serve *you*. Give us the opportunity to serve *your* needs as you pursue higher learning in the acquisition arena — and good luck in that endeavor! Hopefully, *we'll meet you in St. Louis!*



Top: Students share a light moment during classes at the St. Louis Regional Center. Left: Dr. Julius Hein, Director, DSMC Central Region. Arch symbolizing the city of St. Louis, Mo. — Gateway to the West and home of DSMC's Central Region.

facilities. Students are then shown their seat assignment and given, by Service, a color coded name tent, e.g., green for Army, dark blue for Navy, light blue for Air Force, red for Marine Corps, yellow for DLA and white for industry.

plan activities that encourage camaraderie, classroom participation and networking throughout the duration of the course. We encourage students to bring an instrument along for social gatherings. For social or working gatherings, the entertainment commit-

